

William Morris Primary School

Inspection report

Unique Reference Number	102661
Local Authority	Merton
Inspection number	355230
Inspection dates	25–26 November 2010
Reporting inspector	Natalia Power

This inspection of the school was carried out under section 5 of the Education Act 2005.

Type of school	Primary
School category	Community
Age range of pupils	3–11
Gender of pupils	Mixed
Number of pupils on the school roll	217
Appropriate authority	The governing body
Chair	Chris Young
Headteacher	Jo Klimek
Date of previous school inspection	27 February 2008
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Introduction

This inspection was carried out by three additional inspectors. The inspectors observed 16 lessons taught by eight different teachers and talked to parents and carers, members of the governing body, staff and pupils. They observed the school's work, and looked in particular at its self-evaluation documents and plans for improvement, the data collected on pupils' progress, safeguarding information and the minutes of governing body meetings. They considered the responses in 30 questionnaires that had been returned by parents and carers.

The inspection team reviewed many aspects of the school's work. It looked in detail at a number of key questions.

- Are the school's measures to raise pupils' attainment in English, particularly in writing, preparing them adequately for the next stage of their education?
- What is the quality of the teaching and does it challenge pupils to do their best?
- How effective are the school's measures to improve attendance?
- What is the impact of the new leaders and managers on school improvement?

Information about the school

William Morris is an average-sized primary school. A third of pupils are known to be eligible for free school meals, and this proportion is higher than usual. Four fifths of pupils are from a wide range of minority ethnic backgrounds. Around two fifths of pupils speak English as an additional language, but few of these are at an early stage of learning English. Over half of pupils have a wide range of special educational needs and/or disabilities, and this proportion is higher than usual. The school runs a breakfast club and after-school clubs.

The former headteacher left at the end of the spring term 2010. An interim headteacher was appointed from the beginning of the summer term 2010, initially for one term, while proposals for the future direction of the school were under discussion. Her contract was renewed until the end of the autumn term 2010 and has been extended again until the end of the spring term 2011.

Inspection grades: 1 is outstanding, 2 is good, 3 is satisfactory, and 4 is inadequate

Please turn to the glossary for a description of the grades and inspection terms

Inspection judgements

Overall effectiveness: how good is the school?

4

The school's capacity for sustained improvement

4

Main findings

In accordance with section 13 (3) of the Education Act 2005, Her Majesty's Chief Inspector is of the opinion that this school requires special measures because it is failing to give its pupils an acceptable standard of education and the persons responsible for leading, managing or governing the school are not demonstrating the capacity to secure the necessary improvement.

- Pupils leave school with attainment in mathematics that is below average and attainment in English that is significantly below average. This means that they are not adequately prepared for the next stage of their education. Scrutiny of the work of pupils currently in Year 6 indicates that they are unlikely to master the basic skills any better than their predecessors over the last three years.
- Children do not make the progress expected of them in the Early Years Foundation Stage, especially in the acquisition of language skills, because the play environment is insufficiently stimulating, and too many activities are teacher-led, rather than springing from the children's interests. Pupils from Years 1 to 6 continue to make inadequate progress, especially in writing.
- The inadequate learning and progress made by pupils reflects the quality of teaching. Too many lessons are unchallenging and too little is expected of the pupils. Teachers do not always plan well enough how teaching assistants can best be deployed to promote children's learning. Marking does not always show pupils clearly enough what they need to do to improve. The interim headteacher has begun to implement a programme of lesson observations, but too few have been undertaken in the past two terms to have a positive impact on the overall quality of teaching and learning.
- The interim headteacher has begun to track the attainment of groups of pupils. However, these measures are recent and the assessment information is not always used rigorously enough in the classroom to help pupils to do better.
- Attendance is low. The school has made considerable efforts to raise attendance and there are recent encouraging signs that overall attendance is beginning to improve. However, the persistent absenteeism of a small minority of pupils remains a stubborn problem and is a factor in their low attainment.
- The curriculum is enriched by strengths in music, and pupils playing the steel pans are successful in borough competitions. However, the core curriculum does not adequately meet the needs of all pupils. There are too few opportunities for pupils to develop fluency in writing in a range of topics across the curriculum. In too many subjects there is an over-reliance on worksheets.

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- Children whose circumstances have made them vulnerable are looked after well, and pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities are given sound support which enables them to make progress in line with others.
- The school has a welcoming, friendly ethos. One parent commented, 'It looks after all the children well.'
- Though the school runs efficiently from day-to-day, uncertainty about its future has led to inadequate self-evaluation and a lack of planning. Too little has been put in place to tackle the improvement points from the last inspection. For example, pupils' attainment in English remains a concern throughout the school, and the quality of teaching overall is lower than at the time of the last inspection. These factors show that the school has an inadequate capacity for sustained improvement.

What does the school need to do to improve further?

- Raise pupils' attainment in English and mathematics by:
 - increasing the level of challenge and expecting more from the pupils in all lessons
 - ensuring that pupils have as many opportunities as possible to gain fluency in writing in a range of subjects
 - reducing the use of worksheets.
- Improve the quality of pupils' learning and raise the quality of teaching by:
 - implementing a programme of rigorous and frequent classroom observations
 - ensuring that teaching assistants are effectively deployed to promote learning
 - improving the consistency and quality of marking, to ensure that all pupils understand how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve.
- Improve the quality of the Early Years Foundation Stage by:
 - expecting all adults to provide stimulating questioning to enable the children to use language effectively
 - planning activities that start from the children's own interests
 - providing richer and more varied learning experiences with greater opportunities for children to explore the natural environment.
- Take more robust action to improve the attendance of pupils overall and particularly of the small minority of persistent absentees.

Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils

4

Pupils report that they enjoy school. However, their overall achievement is inadequate. Since 2006 there has been a steady pattern of below average attainment in mathematics in the national tests taken at the end of Year 6. English results have been even lower, and there has been a downward trend in this subject from 2006 to 2009. Scrutiny of the quality of writing of Year 6 pupils who left the school in 2010, and that of pupils currently in the school, indicates that there has been little improvement. There are disparities in the attainment of groups within the school. For example, the attainment of White British pupils is exceptionally low because their needs have only recently been identified and

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teachers have not had the opportunity to make full use of tracking information to provide work which challenges them to do their best.

Most pupils, including those with special educational needs and/or disabilities and those who speak English as an additional language, make inadequate progress from starting points which are generally below average. In some lessons observed by inspectors pupils made faster progress, especially when the level of challenge was stimulating and more was expected of them. For example, in one music lesson which took place after school, pupils were required to concentrate in order to keep in step with one another while playing and singing. Their tasks were not easy, but they responded to the challenge with enthusiasm and learned a great deal about rhythm and harmony. All too often, however, too little is expected of the pupils, and they are held back when they are keen to move forward and learn more quickly.

Pupils are friendly, confident and polite to visitors. They understand the importance of a healthy diet, and have adequate opportunities to take part in physical activities. Pupils feel safe in school and report that there is no bullying. Behaviour is satisfactory overall, reflecting pupils' satisfactory spiritual, moral, social and cultural development. Pupils make a satisfactory contribution to the school and the wider community, and enjoy taking responsibility within school, for example by serving on the school council. They are proud of the contribution made to their local community by the different music groups within the school.

These are the grades for pupils' outcomes

Pupils' achievement and the extent to which they enjoy their learning	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attainment ¹	4
The quality of pupils' learning and their progress	4
The quality of learning for pupils with special educational needs and/or disabilities and their progress	4
The extent to which pupils feel safe	3
Pupils' behaviour	3
The extent to which pupils adopt healthy lifestyles	3
The extent to which pupils contribute to the school and wider community	3
The extent to which pupils develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being	4
Taking into account:	
Pupils' attendance ¹	4
The extent of pupils' spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	3

¹ The grades for attainment and attendance are: 1 is high; 2 is above average; 3 is broadly average; and 4 is low

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How effective is the provision?

Pupils are given sound care and support, and the care of children whose circumstances have made them vulnerable is a particular strength. The breakfast club offers healthy food and provides an interesting range of activities that ensure the pupils who attend have a settled start to the day. The school works in satisfactory partnership with external agencies to support pupils with a range of special educational needs and/or disabilities.

One parent commented, 'All teachers and staff are very helpful and they work hard for the children's education.' Pupils like their teachers because, as one commented, 'Teachers help us and we get to learn things we didn't know.' Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well. However, the pace of learning is typically too slow, and in such cases pupils become fidgety, especially if they are kept sitting on the carpet for too long or not given the opportunity to take responsibility for their own learning. Teachers do not always plan the work of the teaching assistants sufficiently well to enable them always to provide high quality tasks targeted at the needs of specific groups. The quality of marking varies from class to class and from subject to subject, and this means that pupils are not always clear about how well they are doing and what they need to do to improve their work.

Opportunities to develop pupils' writing skills in a range of topics across the curriculum are sometimes missed. A scrutiny of pupils' work from Years 1 to 6 shows that all too often there is an over-reliance on worksheets, and this holds back pupils' fluency in writing and acquisition of mathematical skills. The curriculum has strengths, particularly in the after-school music and sport activities. However, other enrichment activities are insufficiently planned to raise pupils' aspirations, and residential trips are poorly attended.

These are the grades for the quality of provision

The quality of teaching	4
Taking into account: The use of assessment to support learning	4
The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships	4
The effectiveness of care, guidance and support	3

How effective are leadership and management?

The interim headteacher has begun to identify key areas for improvement. However, uncertainty about the future direction of the school has had an impact on the ability of leaders and managers to plan, and a great deal more remains to be done to establish secure improvement in pupils' achievement and in the quality of teaching. Because the school has only just begun to track the progress of groups of pupils, its actions to promote equality of opportunity and to tackle discrimination have been inadequate, and this is seen, for example, in the inadequate achievement of pupils from White British backgrounds. The governing body plays an active role in the life of the school. However, in the past it did not hold school leaders sufficiently to account for the low attainment of pupils, so the overall effectiveness of the governing body is inadequate. The school offers

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inadequate value for money as resources are not producing adequate outcomes for pupils. These factors indicate that the effectiveness of leaders' and managers' ambition and drive for improvement is inadequate.

Leaders and governors ensure that safeguarding procedures are sound, and that pupils have an adequate understanding of how to keep themselves safe. Vetting procedures are stringent. The school's promotion of community cohesion is inadequate. Though pupils from a wide variety of backgrounds get on well together, not enough is done to promote their understanding of other people in national and global contexts.

These are the grades for leadership and management

The effectiveness of leadership and management in embedding ambition and driving improvement	4
Taking into account: The leadership and management of teaching and learning	4
The effectiveness of the governing body in challenging and supporting the school so that weaknesses are tackled decisively and statutory responsibilities met	4
The effectiveness of the school's engagement with parents and carers	3
The effectiveness of partnerships in promoting learning and well-being	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes equality of opportunity and tackles discrimination	4
The effectiveness of safeguarding procedures	3
The effectiveness with which the school promotes community cohesion	4
The effectiveness with which the school deploys resources to achieve value for money	4

Early Years Foundation Stage

Children quickly settle into the Early Years Foundation Stage because home visits are made to familiarise them and their families with the Nursery. The adults take care of them and ensure that they are safe. The children behave well and usually get on well with one another. However, in both the Nursery and the Reception classes, children are provided with too few stimulating and imaginative activities. The play areas, both indoors and outdoors, are unoriginal and provide too few opportunities for children to acquire a sense of awe at the wonders of nature and science. By the time they leave Reception, the children have made inadequate progress in acquiring new skills. One reason for this is the limited interaction between adults and children. All too often the adults fail to build on the children's enthusiasms by not asking them questions designed to make them think and answer in full sentences. Some activities are too dominated by the adults, and the children are sometimes kept sitting on the floor for far too long. There is currently no Early Years coordinator and the headteacher has taken on the role in the absence of a specialist leader. She recognises that not enough is done to provide activities designed to build on the children's interests. She has improved the outdoor areas so that they are safe and

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provide opportunities for children to explore all six areas of learning outdoors as well as indoors.

These are the grades for the Early Years Foundation Stage

Overall effectiveness of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
Taking into account:	
Outcomes for children in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The quality of provision in the Early Years Foundation Stage	4
The effectiveness of leadership and management of the Early Years Foundation Stage	4

Views of parents and carers

The proportion of questionnaires submitted during the inspection was considerably lower than is typical of primary schools. All those who returned questionnaires or who spoke to inspectors agreed that the school meets the needs of their children and that it keeps them healthy. A small minority expressed concerns about their children's safety. Inspectors interviewed leaders and members of the governing body, studied the school's safeguarding procedures and toured the school, looking specifically at safeguarding issues. They found that safeguarding is satisfactory. A few parents and carers were concerned about behaviour. Inspectors found that, during the inspection, behaviour was satisfactory overall. A few parents and carers felt that their views were not taken sufficiently into account. Inspection evidence supports a judgement of satisfactory for the school's partnership with parents and carers. All those who returned questionnaires were happy with their children's experience at the school. Inspectors, however, judge that the quality of education provided by the school is not good enough.

Responses from parents and carers to Ofsted's questionnaire

Ofsted invited all the registered parents and carers of pupils registered at William Morris Primary School to complete a questionnaire about their views of the school.

In the questionnaire, parents and carers were asked to record how strongly they agreed with 13 statements about the school.

The inspection team received 30 completed questionnaires by the end of the on-site inspection. In total, there are 217 pupils registered at the school.

Statements	Strongly agree		Agree		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%	Total	%
My child enjoys school	19	63	9	30	1	3	0	0
The school keeps my child safe	8	27	14	47	6	20	0	0
My school informs me about my child's progress	12	40	17	57	1	3	0	0
My child is making enough progress at this school	12	40	16	53	1	3	0	0
The teaching is good at this school	10	33	16	53	1	3	0	0
The school helps me to support my child's learning	10	33	18	60	1	3	0	0
The school helps my child to have a healthy lifestyle	9	30	20	67	0	0	0	0
The school makes sure that my child is well prepared for the future (for example changing year group, changing school, and for children who are finishing school, entering further or higher education, or entering employment)	5	17	18	60	1	3	0	0
The school meets my child's particular needs	5	17	20	67	0	0	0	0
The school deals effectively with unacceptable behaviour	6	20	20	67	3	10	1	3
The school takes account of my suggestions and concerns	7	23	18	60	3	10	0	0
The school is led and managed effectively	7	23	17	57	1	3	0	0
Overall, I am happy with my child's experience at this school	12	40	16	53	0	0	0	0

The table above summarises the responses that parents and carers made to each statement. The percentages indicate the proportion of parents and carers giving that response out of the total number of completed questionnaires. Where one or more parents and carers chose not to answer a particular question, the percentages will not add up to 100%.

Glossary

What inspection judgements mean

Grade	Judgement	Description
Grade 1	Outstanding	These features are highly effective. An outstanding school provides exceptionally well for all its pupils' needs.
Grade 2	Good	These are very positive features of a school. A school that is good is serving its pupils well.
Grade 3	Satisfactory	These features are of reasonable quality. A satisfactory school is providing adequately for its pupils.
Grade 4	Inadequate	These features are not of an acceptable standard. An inadequate school needs to make significant improvement in order to meet the needs of its pupils. Ofsted inspectors will make further visits until it improves.

Overall effectiveness of schools

Type of school	Overall effectiveness judgement (percentage of schools)			
	Outstanding	Good	Satisfactory	Inadequate
Nursery schools	58	36	4	2
Primary schools	8	43	40	9
Secondary schools	10	35	42	13
Sixth forms	13	39	45	3
Special schools	33	42	20	4
Pupil referral units	18	40	29	12
All schools	11	42	38	9

New school inspection arrangements were introduced on 1 September 2009. This means that inspectors now make some additional judgements that were not made previously.

The data in the table above are for the period 1 September 2009 to 31 March 2010 and are the most recently published data available (see www.ofsted.gov.uk). Please note that the sample of schools inspected during the autumn and spring terms 2009/10 was not representative of all schools nationally, as weaker schools are inspected more frequently than good or outstanding schools.

Percentages are rounded and do not always add exactly to 100. Secondary school figures include those that have sixth forms, and sixth form figures include only the data specifically for sixth form inspection judgements.

Common terminology used by inspectors

Achievement:	the progress and success of a pupil in their learning, development or training.
Attainment:	the standard of the pupils' work shown by test and examination results and in lessons.
Capacity to improve:	the proven ability of the school to continue improving. Inspectors base this judgement on what the school has accomplished so far and on the quality of its systems to maintain improvement.
Leadership and management:	the contribution of all the staff with responsibilities, not just the headteacher, to identifying priorities, directing and motivating staff and running the school.
Learning:	how well pupils acquire knowledge, develop their understanding, learn and practise skills and are developing their competence as learners.
Overall effectiveness:	<p>inspectors form a judgement on a school's overall effectiveness based on the findings from their inspection of the school. The following judgements, in particular, influence what the overall effectiveness judgement will be.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">■ The school's capacity for sustained improvement.■ Outcomes for individuals and groups of pupils.■ The quality of teaching.■ The extent to which the curriculum meets pupils' needs, including, where relevant, through partnerships.■ The effectiveness of care, guidance and support.
Progress:	the rate at which pupils are learning in lessons and over longer periods of time. It is often measured by comparing the pupils' attainment at the end of a key stage with their attainment when they started.

This letter is provided for the school, parents and carers to share with their children. It describes Ofsted's main findings from the inspection of their school.



29 November 2010

Dear Pupils

Inspection of William Morris Primary School, Mitcham CR4 1PJ

Thank you for making us so welcome when we visited your school recently, and for telling us your views. We were pleased to see that you are happy at school and get on well together. However, you are not all doing as well as you should, and are not making fast enough progress. We have put the school into 'special measures', which means that we have asked for those in charge to be given extra help to improve your learning. Inspectors will return in a few months to check on the progress that the school is making.

We want all of you to do much better in English, especially in your writing, and also in mathematics. We have therefore asked those in charge to visit your classes regularly to make sure that you are always given tasks that help you to do your best and really make you think. We have also asked them to make sure that the marking in all your books shows you how to improve. We know that some of you find writing quite hard. We have asked the adults to plan new ways of helping you practise writing as much as possible in all your subjects, not just in English. We have also asked them to make sure you do not receive too many worksheets but do your own writing. You should soon find that all the adults are expecting more of you, and this includes the teaching assistants who help so many of you individually and in groups.

We have asked the adults who work in Nursery and Reception to give the youngest among you more interesting activities and to help you to develop your language skills as well as your understanding of nature and science.

Your school keeps you safe, and all the adults take care of you, and are kind and fair to you. You told us that you feel safe in school and that you like your teachers. We know that all the adults want to help you to do your best. All of you can play your part in helping to improve your school. One way in which you can do this is to persuade your parents and carers to bring you to school every day, so that you do not miss a moment of the exciting changes that will soon be happening in your school.

On behalf of the inspectors, I wish you all the best for the future.

Yours sincerely

Natalia Power
Lead inspector

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